Challenges Facing Aquaculture in the European Union

Encouraging Economic Viability

Public aid – investment by the community since 1970s

New species, organic, and "environment friendly" aquaculture – creation of more opportunities

Aquaculture feeds – search for effective protein substitutes

Competition for space – integrated territorial approach involving all stakeholders; offshore aquaculture

Markets and marketing – need for promotional campaigns and public support

Governance – EU legislation does not exist; regulated by national legislation

Guaranteeing Food Safety, Animal Health and Welfare

Dioxin – maximum limits set in 2001; little effect on farmed fish b/c fish meal adheres to strict standards

Antibiotics – research being conducted to develop more vaccines, reducing the use of antibiotics

Harmful algal blooms – increasing knowledge of role of nutrients

Animal health – legislation governing the marketing of aquaculture products and control of diseases affecting fish and mollusks

Sea lice – parasite infecting farmed salmon and sea trout

Disease control – focus on prevention rather than curing

Addressing Environmental Effects

On-growing of wild fish – demand may hurt the status of already over fished species

Eutrophication – too many nutrients can be harmful to an ecosystem

Escapees, alien species, and GMOs – escapes breeding with wild species may reduce genetic diversity

Predation by protected species – complex issue of controlling wild species

Re-stocking – "ecological" restocking of died out species (i.e. sturgeon) have been initiated

Positive effects of extensive farming
– sustainable aquaculture improves
environmental protection and
restoration